



## MARION COUNTY PARKS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES OF THE MEETING

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**May 21, 2015 ~ 9:00 -11:00 a.m.**

**5155 Silverton Rd. NE, Salem, Oregon in the North Santiam Room**

**PRESENT:** Scott Anderson, Sandy Grulkey, Marty Heyen, George Moeller, Wayne Rawlins, Ben Williams

**STAFF:** Jeff Bickford, Russ Dilley, Alan Haley, Matt Knudsen, Keare Blaylock, Jolene Bray

**BOC LIAISON:** MC Commissioner Sam Brentano

**CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS: 9:00 a.m.**

George congratulated Marty on her recent election to the Salem-Keizer school board.

**APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 5, 2015 MEETING MINUTES**

Scott made a motion to approve the February 5, 2015 meeting minutes. Wayne seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**CATHY CROCKER VOLUNTEER PRESENTATION**

Jeff said Cathy is no longer with Marion County so this will be continued at the next meeting. Jeff said the county has over twenty advisory boards and a multitude of volunteers, so the county will move to fill this position quickly.

**COMMISSIONER UPDATES**

Marty said she talked to Zach Urness at the Statesman Journal about doing some articles about county parks. She said he sounded interested in doing this so hopefully he'll move forward with that. George and Wayne both shared an article written by Zach Urness that highlighted the county parks. George said the "Causes" section had an article that identified volunteer opportunities. After some discussion, the commission decided to hold off pursuing an article in "Causes" until a new volunteer coordinator is hired. Marty said she heard from Mary Owens with NW Boomer & Senior News and she wants to do stories about county parks. Marty said she directed her to the county parks website which has good info. She said Mary wants to get a list of trail opportunities together for an article and she wants pictures. Russ said he also received an email from her and responded that the best trails in county parks are at Eola Bend, Niagara, North Fork, and Joryville. She also asked about bike trails and Jeff suggested Willamette Mission State Park. If Marty follows up with Mary, she was asked to mention volunteer opportunities with parks and the opening on the parks commission. Jeff said if there's a group that wants to do a group activity, they can contact Russ.

Ben said they did Phase 1 of the Butteville proposal. He said they have two reactionary parties so they are not pushing, but trying to build grass roots support in the community. He said they are timing the item to go with when boat dock is connected to Champoeg Park, so trying to balance those two things. He said there is concern that unused right-of-ways are subject to petition by citizens for abandonment. He said one property owner has encroached on the right-of-way and is surprised they haven't petitioned for abandonment. He said it will be a huge loss to the county if they do, but it hasn't been used in decades. Jeff said public works did do clearing of the path and put in a bench near the water but someone destroyed the bench, and when they replaced it that

bench was also stolen. He said the county decided not to invest any more money at that point because the property is not a county park and didn't want to spend any more park dollars.

Wayne said at the last meeting he shared his concern about whether there would be grant funding available. He said he talked to the CFO of Oregon State Parks and asked him to send information. Wayne said it shows the current biennium for grants and the focus of each. He said all the grants are increasing somewhat. George asked if he checked with state parks about including the Marion County Parks brochure. He said he has not, but he will.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **Follow-up on Old Business**

George asked if Sandy checked into the Marion County Fair. She said she did and at \$145 it's expensive for a booth. She said fair staff also sent a map and the good places were already taken. Marty suggested a booth at the Salem Saturday Market. She said there is an area for non-profits so there may not be a cost. Wayne said the Oregon State Fair is concentrating on a new set of procurement rules that allows government entities to be creative with the exchange of goods. He said the state fair may give space if participants do something in return.

George said he was supposed to work on the volunteer website with Cathy Crocker but is deferring until a replacement is hired.

George asked if staff have received an update from the disc golf folks. Jeff said staff hasn't heard anything from them and we left it that they would contact us.

George asked for a new membership list with staff names and phone numbers.

George said the commission currently doesn't have a vice chair and that needs to be resolved. Scott nominated Wayne as vice chair. Wayne said he accepted the nomination. Marty seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Jeff will prepare paperwork to take to the board of commissioners for approval.

Wayne asked if Bonesteele Park is still going to be gated. Jeff said it will be done in the next fiscal year.

### **Scotts Mills Dam Discussion**

George said this issue was discussed at the February meeting and tabled until this meeting. He said the commission can discuss now or wait until after the field trip. Scott said he'd prefer to leave tabled until they have more information. He said there's been a lot of allusion to the watershed council having conversations with other government agencies but we haven't received anything that summarizes that info or any written communication. He said until we get that and become familiar with it, he doesn't feel he can take action.

George asked Matt and Keare if they have any information to share. Matt said the Pudding River Watershed Council just had an assessment of Butte Creek and parts of the Pudding River Watershed and Scotts Mills Dam. He said they were looking at spring juvenile Chinook salmon and it was pointed out that the juvenile chinook can't climb the fish diversion during low water. He said this appears to be biggest issue. Matt said he can't see what the issue is with the actual dam infrastructure because the report didn't detail what needs to happen or offer alternatives, and at this point all information focuses on the spring juvenile Chinook salmon. George asked when the dam was built. Russ said in the 1860's. Scott asked if the Corp of Engineers has jurisdiction over the structure. Jeff said the county was told for years that it wasn't theirs but Russ has done research and found that Marion County is the owner of the structure but it is unknown who is responsible for maintenance. Alan said Parks is responsible for the management of the dam but ownership is with Marion County Business Services. Sandy said the county line splits right in the middle of the dam/river. Jeff said that's correct. Alan said usually in

these instances one jurisdiction has ownership and in this case Marion County is responsible. Russ said the survey department has also supplied deeds.

George asked if there has been discussion to remove the dam. Sandy said there has been for years but jurisdiction issues presented a problem. She said some time ago a group of people wanted the dam repaired and Marion County Water and Soil looked at it and decided not to repair when a better option was to remove. She said it's considered a detriment to park safety and an attractive nuisance. Matt said the issues he sees are questions about what benefit there would be to fish migration if the dam structure is removed. He said it seems that it would have benefits for fish although some were getting past the dam. Wayne asked if there is documentation from ODFW. Keare said they looked at their data and it's listed as a spawning habitat but their observations of fish as a threatened species was 1996. She said they released 2014 data but haven't had observations for some time so not sure if this is an actual barrier. Keare said there is a diversion on the side that fish may be using to get around the dam and spawning upstream. She said the Coho were successful, but was not sure of Steelhead or Chinook. George said this leads to the need for the Parks Commission to visit and view the dam. Scott said if anything is going to be done to that dam there will need to be an environmental assessment done before anything else is done. He said Parks will need to step forward to say they're the jurisdiction or find someone else who may have superseding authority that may want to be responsible for the assessment, but that will need to happen first. He said there will be a cost involved and checklist, but what questions arise from that and the worst case may require an environmental impact statement which could cost as much as \$50,000. He said he wants everyone to have in mind that this isn't a simple process. Ben said if there are archeological issues that could also multiply the cost. Scott said there is a lot to be done in identifying which agency has jurisdiction and then deciding what we do with it. Sandy said she was fine with tabling this until after the field trip until a later meeting.

#### **Bonesteele Park Work Plans – Scott Anderson**

Scott said this has been an interesting process. He said they have started a survey and gotten one other OSU Master Naturalist involved. He said she's putting together a directory on a PowerPoint that will identify native species planted there with descriptive info and may want to put on the website. He said she's done a nice job. He said they are going mostly once a week and has been surprised with how much is there. He said when he was there before it was not during bloom season and he didn't see very much in terms of foliage but has since identified 27 species planted there and most are in bloom. He said there are 6 acres planted east of the woodland area toward the north boundary with probably 25-35% actual coverage and a lot more than he anticipated. He said there are pretty severe problems with bracken fern and Himalayan blackberry, but there is not so much scotch broom. He said he will get done with the survey at the end of summer.

Scott said it is more significant than he thought and worth discussion on a couple levels. He said we need to decide what we will recommend doing with the property. He said there was a document adopted in 2010 that has to do with heritage parks that talks about specifics and the commission ought to review to see if it should be kept or revised because there are responsibilities. He said the commission also needs to look at it from a staffing and cost point of view.

Marty asked if he could provide info to Mary from NW Boomer & Senior News for an article. Scott said he would. He said it will be interesting to come back with a full representation which will have a high and low recommendation for the property. He said he had a meeting with Linda Boyer and Susan Moray who did the initial plantings at Bonesteele Park, and with Bob Hansen the former Public Works director. He said it was very helpful and he will probably be getting recommendations from Linda and Susan about maintenance because both are recognized experts. George asked about the history of the property. Scott said it was originally agriculture production and the plantings were done by Marion County from 1998-2002. Ben asked if the Heritage Parks document is available. Scott said it's on the website. George asked about involvement of

Chemeketa Community College (CCC) and Willamette University. Scott said no one is doing work on the survey except the OSU Naturalists and Gardeners. George asked if CCC could be used for plant identification. Scott said they do for students and are the main user of the park.

#### **STAFF UPDATES**

- Russ said all parks are open for the season and it hasn't been too busy. He said the parks summer aide quit after a week effective today. Jeff said Russ may be able to get an operations worker to assist until another aide is hired.
- Russ said that when parks opened for the season, the county had contracted with a new security company to open and close gates at Scotts Mills, Aumsville Ponds and Spong's Landing. Their bid was half the price of the last security company. He said he went to Spong's Landing at 8:00 a.m. the first day and the gates were closed. He said he contacted the juvenile crew going to Scotts Mills and then went to Aumsville Ponds and that gate was also closed with people waiting. He opened the gates and then heard that the gates at Scotts Mills were opened. He said after a few days he heard that Aumsville Ponds was not opening and was also had gates left open overnight. Russ said he then heard from the security company that they couldn't do the work. He called the previous security company (Prostar) and they started that day. Ben asked if going with low cost or best value. Jeff said until they don't perform, we don't know they aren't able to.
- Russ said the camp host is back at Bear Creek Campground and it's had about 11 campers so far.
- Russ said the board of commissioners gave permission to put up gates and change hours at Bonesteele Park. He said it probably won't happen until the fall seasonal closure. Russ said they will be doing one gate at Bonesteele Park and placing a guardrail at the other exit with reflectors. Scott asked about signage at Bonesteele and said there isn't anything that identifies it as a natural heritage park. He said he and Jeff have also talked about some signage that identifies some native flora on site. Jeff said we have a sign shop at Public Works and they can make signs. Scott said upgraded signage would be nice.
- Marty asked if there was a way to call to see if a camping spot is available at Bear Creek Campground. Jeff said there are no phone line and no cell reception, so there's no way to know for sure without driving out there. He said during the week there is usually space, and after the 4<sup>th</sup> of July it's usually full on weekends.
- Russ said they have had a couple complaints about kids doing donuts in the parking lot at Joryville Park and he wants to put up a second gate and close at night.
- Russ said the Parks Commission will also see the new play structure at Scotts Mills Park today.

**NEXT MEETING: August 20th at 9:00 a.m. in the North Santiam Room at Public Works**

**ADJOURN: 10:10 a.m.**